

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7078

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 5356

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM/OPANAL/XM/MX/FR/CH

SUBJECT: FRANCE ADHERES TO PROTOCOL II TO TREATY OF
TLATELOLCO

REF: MEXICO 5180

1. IN JULY 18 CEREMONIES AT MEXICAN FOREIGN SECRETARIAT, FRENCH AMBASSADOR JEAN BELIARD SIGNED DOCUMENTS VIA WHICH FRENCH GOVERNMENT ADHERED TO PROTOCOL II TO THE TREATY OF TLATELOLCO (WHICH ESTABLISHED ORGANIZATION FOR PROSCRIPTION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN LATIN AMERICA, OPANAL). IN HIS REMARKS, AMBASSADOR BELIARD STATED THAT THIS WAS YET ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE PEACEFUL INTENT WHICH FRANCE HAS TOWARDS ALL NATIONS, IN PARTICULAR THOSE OF LATIN AMERICA.

2. IN HIS POST-CEREMONY STATEMENTS TO PRESS, AMBASSADOR BELIARD RESPONDED TO QUESTIONS ON FRENCH TESTING PROGRAM IN A VERY DEFENSIVE TONE. HE INSISTED THAT FRANCE HAD
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TO RESERVE HER RIGHT OF SELF DEFENSE, DREW ATTENTION

TO ALLEGED UN STUDY WHICH DISCOUNTED CONCEIVABLE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF THE TESTING PROGRAM, AND COMMENTED ON FACT THAT FRANCE IS PLANNING FOR ITS 15TH TEST AS OPPOSED TO 500 BY USG, "MANY OTHERS" BY USSR AND 50 BY PRC. AMBASSADOR FURTHER STATED THAT PRIOR TO TESTING FRANCE HAD CARRIED OUT RESEARCH TO GUARANTEE AGAINST HARMFUL EFFECTS.

3. FOREIGN SECRETARY RABASA, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION FROM PRESS CONCERNING GOM ATTITUDE ON ANTICIPATED FRENCH TESTING, REITERATED WELL-KNOWN MEXICAN POSITION OPPOSING ALL TESTING IN WHATEVER AMBIANCE.

4. IN CONNECTION WITH SIGNING CEREMONY, OPANAL SECRETARY GENERAL HECTOR GROS ESPIELL EXPRESSED OPTIMISM THAT PRC WOULD ADHERE TO PROTOCOL II PRIOR TO AUGUST 21 (REFTEL).

5. PRESS REPORTED THAT FRANCE SIGNED PROTOCOL "WITHOUT RESERVATIONS". TECHNICALLY THIS IS TRUE. AT SAME TIME, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OF OPANAL, GONZALEZ DE LEON, CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF THAT FRENCH HAD SUBMITTED "INTERPRETATIONS" SIMILAR TO, BUT BRIEFER THAN, THOSE OF USG WHEN WE SIGNED SAME PROTOCOL. APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTS WILL BE CIRCULATED IN NEAR FUTURE BUT IN MEANTIME GONZALEZ DE LEON CONFIRMED THAT FRENCH INCLUDED STATEMENT ON TRANSIT, AND IN SOMEWHAT REDUNDANT FASHION, NOTED THAT ADHERENCE DID NOT AFFECT FRANCE'S RIGHTS TO SELF DEFENSE UNDER ARTICLE 51 OF UN CHARTER. (GONZALEZ DE LEON -- PROTECT -- MUSED ABOUT POSSIBILITY THAT FRENCH MIGHT BE CONCERNED ABOUT POTENTIAL FOR TROUBLE ON FRENCH GUIANA-BRAZIL BORDER). GONZALEZ DE LEON FURTHER TOLD EMBOFF THAT ONLY "NOVELTY" IN FRENCH POSITION WAS PROVISIO UNDER WHICH ADHERENCE TO PROTOCOL WOULD REMAIN BILATERALLY INOPERATIVE WITH ANY OTHER CONTRACTING PARTY WHO MIGHT OBJECT TO TERMS OF FRENCH ACTION.

6. COMMENT: FRENCH MOTIVATION IN STEPPING UP SCHEDULE FOR ADHERENCE TO TREATY SEEMS TO BE TRANSPARENT ATTEMPT TO BLUNT SOME OF LATIN CRITICISM WHICH INEVITABLY

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WILL COME WHEN SOUTH PACIFIC EXPLOSIONS DO TAKE PLACE. IN THIS RESPECT, AMBASSADOR BELIARD'S ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN AWAY ILL EFFECTS OF THOSE TESTS IS GALLANT BUT NOT APT TO BE EFFECTIVE.
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